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BARA Facts

Newsletter of the Binghamton Amateur Radio Association

November 2002

Website: <http://www.wtsn.binghamton.edu/bara>

The President's Corner

Your Officers and Board Members have been busy looking at potential properties in Broome county as we try to find a new club site. This is not an easy task, especially since everyone seems to have a personal idea of what constitutes a "good" site and sometimes a site that sounds good when we hear about it turns out to be less than desirable. We have looked at properties on hilltops, properties that we *thought* were on hilltops, and other properties that for one reason or another had potential.

If you have ideas on what constitutes a "good" site for BARA, please call me or send me a note vial e-mail. Please also consider attending a board meeting on the first Wednesday of each month to share your thoughts and views. — *George, K2CM*

BARA Elections

Please keep in mind the Election of Officers and Board Members which will occur at our November General Meeting. Offices and Board slots will be up for nomination before the voting starts and the present slate of candidates is listed below:

President:	— Open —
Vice President:	Bob McCabe, KC2DSS
Secretary:	Ron Regan, N2RWK
Treasurer:	Paul Slocum, N2NCB
Board:	Bob Handel, K2FU
	Ed Plesnar, KB2SCF
	Steve Orzelek, N2MSB
	Mel Snitchler, WE2K

We are lacking a candidate for President and are soliciting nominations. Nominations for any other All antennas are down — even from the big tower and there are no broken bones to report. The only equipment damage was a slight twang (easily fixed) to one element

position are also welcome and can be made the night of the meeting or by contacting Bob, KC2DSS.

BARA Christmas Party

Hedy, AA2MU, has reserved Russells for December 18th for the 2002 BARA Christmas Party. The Cocktail Hour to start at about 6:00 in the Bar with the group moving into the dining area about 6:30 for seating and to confirm orders. This event is always the highlight of the BARA social calendar and we can expect plenty of fun, lots of door prizes, and good company for all. A menu is included in this issue of the *BARA Facts* and everyone is encouraged to contact Hedy at (607) 748-4387 to make reservations and place orders. Please call Hedy now so that the Telephone Tree does not have a big job in December.

Hamfest Chairman

We are in need of a Chairman for the BARA Hamfest. Bill, N2BC, has handled this task for the last few years and he suggests that it's time for someone else to run the show. This might sound like a big job, but Paul, N2NCB, has refined the whole Hamfest down to a series of lists with details on when each job needs to be completed. The Chairman gets to work with Paul and the rest of the Officers and Board Members and everyone pulls together as a Team.

But we still need a Chairman and we are asking someone to step forward and "pick up the ball". If you have some time that you are willing to offer to the Club as Hamfest Chairman, please come to one of the Board Meetings or approach one of the Officers at a General Meeting. You could also call Bill and get the straight dope on what the Job involves.

Decommissioning Update Part I

of the 20M beam and we had to destroy the thrust bearing on the 90-foot tower to get the mast out — it was just too rusted to move.

The only personnel damage (no blood involved) was a small shoe fire! I was standing on the gin-pole rope to provide a bit of “friction” as I lowered the mast from the 90-foot tower. I guess I got a bit carried away and I gave myself a hotfoot as the rope burned a groove in the bottom of my boot. The mast is *heavy*!

The majority of the equipment is at Ron's (AA2EQ). We want to hook everything up one last time and then package the stations together (rig, cables, PC, TNCs, etc). This had been the original gameplan but Eddie “The Homewrecker” Plesnar (KB2SCF) was too fast for us. (Ed did a great job dismantling the insides of the building — not to mention trekking out in the boonies to take down the beverage antennae.)

There's still a ton of stuff in the building and the antennas are just piled up behind the building. I'll be working on the antennas to measure, breakdown, and bundle the “right” pieces together. I'll also make a list of needed repair parts as I go, but cleaning will wait for re-install time. I plan to bring the bundled antennas home until we're ready to store everything because I'm worried about them getting wrecked by “visitors” to the hilltop (we had a visit by some kids on 4-wheelers).

Next weekend — weather permitting — we will take down the 90-foot tower. Our resident specialist in mechanical advantage, levers, pulleys, and rigging (Ron) will be picking up some goodies we need for temporary guy wires.

A big “THANKS” to Ron, Homewrecker Ed, Steve Orzelek (N2MSB), Bob Handel, Bill Osier, Mel, Brian Adey (K2DLB). Special Thanks to the old geezers (NK2H & K2FU) — those two wrestled the towers apart and I wish we had videos of them sitting on the ground, grunting and heaving on the tower sections. (Of course, we would have to bleep out most of the audio track.) — *Bill Coleman, N2BC*

Decommissioning Update — Part II

Here are more details on the decommissioning of the club shack and our efforts to remove all radio related equipment from the premises in preparation for the end of our stay at the Milks property. All of the three towers have been taken down and taken apart and all of the antennas are down except one ancient 2-meter vertical on a telephone pole that is too shaky to climb safely. It will come down with a chain saw. The wooden platform at 30-feet that is supported by three telephone poles will also be taken down with chain saw to assure safety. (The

As of now it appears we can complete the work and be out of the shack by the end of this year, perhaps even by the end of November. Many thanks to the gang

club had already agreed early last year to take this down and replace with a fresh tower because the wooden platform had just become too shaky to climb safely.)

Several of the big Yagi HF antennas have been partially taken apart, but the job of completing that while neatly recording what pieces go where so future assembly can go off without a hitch has not yet been done. The inside of the shack has had all the functioning radio electronics removed to heated storage in AA2EQ's garage while items that can survive storage in an unheated barn (such as the tower and antenna pieces) will be stored in the loft of WE2K's barn. Moving this material has to be completed before the snow flies.

The inside of the club shack is a mess right now. The furniture and Microwave Oven are still in place and need to be put into storage. We also have many nicely bundled piles of coax, rotor cable and tower support steel cable laying inside the club shack right now and this adds to the clutter.

The task of dropping the towers, breaking down the antennas and rolling up hundreds of feet of coax, beverage wire, rotor wire and steel cable was done by the following crew: Malcom, KC2EOV; Ray, KC2GIL; Bob, K2FU; Bill, N2BC; Steve, N2MSB; Ed, KB2SCF, Mel, WE2K; and Bill, NK2H. AA2EQ was the lucky dog enjoying the great view from the tops of the towers. For food on the first work weekend we all headed down to the Park Diner, but food for the last weekend of heavy work was provided by Hedy, AA2MU, and we ate where we worked (AA2EQ had his “delivered” to the top of the 30-foot wooden platform).

The weather was great for the first weekend of work with light winds and plenty of sun. By the end of the day we had managed to take down the 40- and 50-foot towers and we had stripped the antennas, rotor and mast from the 90-foot tower. We also took down the Beverage antennas and 40- and 80-meter vertical antennas. (There were lots of little aches and pains following that piece of work.)

Then we had one or two “wash out weekends” where bad weather prevented any heavy work. Finally a “so so” weekend with temperatures in the 50s, heavy clouds, and constant winds of 20-30 MPH in the trees arrived. For fear of even worse weather in the weeks ahead we decided to make a go of it and finished the 90-foot tower take down.

that answered the call for help. Everyone who came made a real difference and contributed to the huge piece of work already completed.

While it is truly a sad thing to loose the place we have called home for some fifty years, we can take heart in the fact that several people (Hams and non-Hams) have come forward to offer us potential new homes. At least two local township governments have given us a “serious listen” and at least one private organization has been very generous in its offers to help relocate our club shack site. With this type of community support it’s just a matter of time before we find a new home. — *Thanks to Ron, AA2EQ*

BARA Equipment

At the October Board Meeting there was discussion of certain pieces of BARA equipment that may have been borrowed in the past. The Board discussed this matter and resolved (by vote) that no BARA property should have been removed from the Shack without authorization of the Shack, Grounds, or Equipment Chairman.

Any members who have an item of BARA equipment in their possession should inform an Officer or Board member and make arrangements for the return of the item(s) so that we can have a complete and accurate inventory of all BARA property.

Simulated Emergency Test (SET) 2002

The Broome County ARES Simulated Emergency was conducted on Saturday, October 12th from 0900 hrs (local) to 1130 hrs. The Simulated Emergency Exercise consisted of “passing traffic” (tactical radio messages) associated with a heavy snowstorm with high winds, falling temperatures and bad road conditions. Emergency communicators were assigned to the American Red Cross office in Endicott, the National Weather Service Office at “Greater” Binghamton Regional Airport, and the Emergency Operation Center at the Broome County Emergency Management Office. Additional communicators were assigned to the Simulated Emergency Shelters at Windsor and Harpursville High Schools. Triangle, Endwell, and Vestal Fire Stations were identified as additional shelters.

Jack Smith, KB2YEN, the ARES Broome County Emergency Coordinator and American Red Cross (ARC) Communications Volunteer initiated the exercise and conducted ARC communications from the new ARC Operations Center in Endicott using both amateur radio and ARC frequencies.

The SET scenario was developed by Ford Drake, AB2HS, who acted as Net Control Station (NCS). Ford is the recently appointed ARES Skywarn Coordinator and District Emergency Coordinator for the Binghamton National Weather

Service office.

WB2MIS, the RACES Communication Center at the Broome County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated by RACES Alternate Radio Officers (ARO) Ron Reagan, N2RWK, and Jack Connors, WB2GHH.

Jerry Smith, WA2QEL, RACES Radio Officer (RO) handled communications from the simulated Shelter at Harpursville High School while Rhett Lawton, KC2JPH, handled the Windsor High School, Sharon Drake, N2WGM, was at the Endwell Shelter while Bill Jaker, WB8RAE, covered the Vestal shelter. Ed Fedor, N2RWH, was the communicator at the Binghamton Weather Service and used the NWS call sign WX2BGM. Steve Hanzlik, K2CDJ, and Dorothy Hanzlik, K2YEH, generated a number of intriguing weather and evacuee health messages from the Triangle Fire station.

Additional points of contact were established with Marv Shoemaker, N2ZMN; Tom Apalenek, WA2IVD; Howard Dingman, AA2CO; and Dave Morford, KB2TTT. Out of county contacts and reports were generated by Fred Stevens, K2FRD, in Chenango County; Malcolm Heath, KC2EOV, and Ray Heath, KC2GIL, in Lansing; Don Gotschall, KB3COS, in Susquehanna County; and Grant Nicholls; KB3FUT in Watkins Glen.

Frequencies in the 146, 220, 440 and VHF commercial bands were utilized and demonstrated the coverage, versatility, agility and imagination of the amateur radio community. Some equipment and procedural elements were identified as requiring improvement thus making this a successful SET. Why does finding a problem make the SET successful? Because documenting a problem and fixing it now (before the fateful “This is not a test” message is heard) means that we are trained and ready. — *Thanks to WB2GHH who provided this report with significant input from AB2HS.*

JOTA 2002

The weather didn't cooperate this year, but a light all-day drizzle didn't stop about 30 Boy Scouts from participating in this years JOTA held at the Maine Town Park. Scout Masters Jim Holton (Troop 201, Endicott) and Don Smith (Troop 212, Vestal) supplied the scouts and BARA members and other local Hams supplied equipment and acted as control operators to show the scouts what amateur radio is capable of doing.

Participating operators included Howard, AA2CO; Pete, KB2JZG; Joe, N2YR; Joe, KB2AVB;

Norm, WB2SYQ; Dick, K2QR; Bob, WA2VCS; Hedy,

When not operating, Joe, KB2AVB, kept the scouts who were not on the radios busy with his QSL card explanations and instructions on what to do when they got their turn to talk. Stateside contacts were made with GA, MI, AL, TN, MI, and OH. International contacts were made with Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, Canada, Great Britain, Croatia, Switzerland, and Sweden. The most interesting contact was with a scout troop camping in Sherwood Forest in Nottingham, England.

Pete, KB2JZG, is already working on plans for next year. He is hoping to hold the JOTA event at a location that would get more exposure to a larger group of scouts. — Thanks to Pete, KB2JZG.

Elliott Taylor, K4EJT, SK

It is with regret that we note the passing of K4EJT — a Ham and a Friend. Elliott died on 4 October in an automobile accident near Geneva, NY.

Those who knew Elliott will remember with fondness his charm, his willingness to lend a hand, and his infectious good nature and enthusiasm. Always interested and helpful he exemplified the best in Amateur Radio and his passing leaves a void for those who knew and loved him. To his wife, children, and family we extend our sympathy.

Harley G. Milks, Sr.

Once again we regret to report the passing of a Milks family member. Harley G. Milks, Sr.— the son of the late Harley E. and Kathryn Milks — who died Monday, October 21, 2002 at home after a short illness.

For those newer members of BARA who may not be acquainted with our history, the W2OW hilltop site is owned by the Milks family. Area HAMS have had use of that site for over fifty years. Harley E. Milks Sr., who was employed years ago by Morris Electronics as a counterman, also used the site to capture the first TV pictures in the area. Harley E. Milks used to refer to our group as “the boys on the hill” and to me as “the Irishman.”

I had much less contact with his son, Harley G. Milks. Over the years it was either telephone calls to him or telephone calls received from him. Always some item concerning the hilltop. Late last year he informed me about a low hanging antenna he encountered while hunting. (I assumed it must have been one of the Beverage antennas.) About two weeks ago I called Harley to inform him of the club’s

AA2MU; Jerry, KG2FY; and Bill, KB2YXT.

progress decommissioning the hilltop. Not knowing the severity of his illness, I joked with him about his going South for the winter and left him with an inquiry. I feel so bad for having bothered him with a question at that late stage in his life, but Harley being Harley indicated he would follow up. And he did.

I’m glad that the club had the benefit of his company and that of his wife Joyce at a number of our December dinner meetings. Sitting next to Harley at the last December meeting, I knew Harley enjoyed it even when (and maybe because) Joyce’s baked potato got lost in the confusion of the evening.

No family should have to endure the heartache and hardship that the Milk’s family has had over the last two years. We offer our condolences to the Milk’s family. “The Irishman.” — Many thanks to Jack, WB2GHH, for the above.

Good Amateur Practice

What is the “Good Amateur Practice” to which we should adhere to in our communications? Often we think in terms of bandwidth or power levels, but FCC Special Consul Riley Hollingsworth has fleshed out the term with concrete suggestions offered in speeches to Clubs, at Hamfests, and in other venues. A Michigan Amateur Radio club is credited with creating a list of “Riley-isms” that Hollingsworth himself has endorsed. According to Hollingsworth, good amateur practice means:

_ Giving a little ground — even if you have a right not to — in order to help preserve Amateur Radio and not cause it to get a bad name or hasten the day when it becomes obsolete.

_ Respecting band plans, because they make it possible for every mode to have a chance.

_ Being aware that we all love Amateur Radio, and there’s no need to damage or disgrace it just to save face.

_ Keeping personal conflicts off the air. Settle your arguments on the telephone, the Internet or in person. Just keep them off the air.

_ Cutting a net or a contester a break, even if you don’t have to and even if you have no interest whatsoever in nets or contesting.

_ Realizing that every right carries responsibilities, and just because you may have a right to do certain things doesn’t mean it’s right to do them in every circumstance. _ You don’t “own” or get preference

to use any frequency. _Not operating so that whoever hears you becomes sorry they ever got into (or tuned in on) Amateur Radio in the first place.

Maybe the bottom line is this. Good Amateur

Practice "...means a lot of things that can't always be quantified." — *From the ARRL Letter for 11 October*

Club Officers and Committees			
President	George Allen	K2CM	760-2775
Vice President	Bob McCabe	KC2DSS	748-9808
Secretary	Ed Krymowski	NE2W	723-2634
Treasurer	Paul Slocum	N2NCB	687-2057
Directors	Bob Handel	K2FU	693-4310
	Ed Plesnar	KB2SCF	754-3810
	Ron Regan	N2RWK	722-6790
	Mel Snitchler	WE2K	723-9612
W2OW Trustee	Frank Scoblick	N2HR	729-4249
Newsletter	Ed Plesnar	KB2SCF	754-3810



BARA, The Binghamton Amateur Radio Association is an ARRL Affiliated Club

Next General Meeting

7:30 PM, Wednesday, November 20th Unitarian Universalist Church Riverside Drive, Binghamton, Next to Lourdes Hospital

Board Meeting

7:00 PM, Wednesday December 4th

Broome Community College Campus, Office of Emergency Services (West Side of Campus)

Exam Session

7:00 PM Monday, November 25th

Vestal Public Library, Route 434 Vestal

1:30 PM, Saturday December 14th

Endicott Fire Station, Across from UE High School

BARA Dues

\$18/year Single Member; \$27/year Family